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ESSAYS  
*on the*  
PHILOSOPHY  
*and*  
SCIENCE  
*of*  
RENÉ  
DESCARTES

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*Edited by*  
STEPHEN VOSS

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# Essays On The Philosophy And Science Of Rene Descartes

**SJ Ball**



## **Essays On The Philosophy And Science Of Rene Descartes:**

*Essays on the Philosophy and Science of René Descartes* Stephen Voss, 1993-02-04 A major contribution to Descartes studies this book provides a panorama of cutting edge scholarship ranging widely over Descartes s own primary concerns metaphysics physics and its applications It is at once a tool for scholars and steering clear of technical Cartesian science an accessible resource that will delight nonspecialists The contributors include Edwin Curley Willis Doney Alan Gabbey Daniel Garber Marjorie Grene Gary Hatfield Marleen Rozemond John Schuster Dennis Sepper Stephen Voss Stephen Wagner Margaret Welton Jean Marie Beyssade Michelle Beyssade Michel Henry Evert van Leeuwen Jean Luc Marion Geneviève Rodis Lewis and Jean Pierre Sris Combining new textual sensitivity with attentiveness to history they represent the best established scholars and most exciting new voices including both English speaking and newly translated writers Part I examines the foundations of Descartes s philosophy Cartesian certainty the phenomenology of the cogito and its modulations in the passions and the defensibility and comprehensibility of the Cartesian God The second part examines Descartes s groundbreaking metaphysics mind s distinctness from and interaction with body imagination perception and language Part III examines Cartesian science the revolutionary rhetoric of the Rules and the Discourse the metaphysical foundations of physics the interplay of rationalism and empiricism the mechanics and human biology that flow from Descartes s physics

Descartes: Philosophical Essays and Correspondence René Descartes, 2000-03-15 A superb text for teaching the philosophy of Descartes this volume includes all his major works in their entirety important selections from his lesser known writings and key selections from his philosophical correspondence The result is an anthology that enables the reader to understand the development of Descartes s thought over his lifetime Includes a biographical Introduction chronology bibliography and index

*René Descartes's Natural Philosophy and Particular Bodies* Fabrizio Baldassarri, 2024-01-01 This book explores René Descartes s attempts to describe particular bodies such as rocks minerals metals plants and animals within the mechanistic interpretation of nature of his philosophical program Despite his early rationalistic epistemology Descartes s increasing attention to collections histories lists of qualities and particular bodies results in a puzzling short history of all natural phenomena contained in the Principles of philosophy 1644 The present book outlines the role of Descartes s observations and experimentation as he aimed to construct a universal science of nature ultimately revealing the mechanization of nature in detail and for curious bodies such as the Bologna Stone or the sensitive herb What results is a theoretical natural history consistent with the mechanical principles of his philosophy ultimately shedding new light on his attempt to produce a complete philosophy of nature

*Encyclopedia of Early Modern Philosophy and the Sciences* Dana Jalobeanu, Charles T. Wolfe, 2022-08-27 This Encyclopedia offers a fresh integrated and creative perspective on the formation and foundations of philosophy and science in European modernity Combining careful contextual reconstruction with arguments from traditional philosophy the book examines methodological dimensions breaks down traditional oppositions

such as rationalism vs empiricism calls attention to gender issues to insiders and outsiders minor figures in philosophy and underground movements among many other topics In addition and in line with important recent transformations in the fields of history of science and early modern philosophy the volume recognizes the specificity and significance of early modern science and discusses important developments including issues of historiography such as historical epistemology the interplay between the material culture and modes of knowledge expert knowledge and craft knowledge This book stands at the crossroads of different disciplines and combines their approaches particularly the history of science the history of philosophy contemporary philosophy of science and intellectual and cultural history It brings together over 100 philosophers historians of science historians of mathematics and medicine offering a comprehensive view of early modern philosophy and the sciences It combines and discusses recent results from two very active fields early modern philosophy and the history of early modern science

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An Essay on the Metaphysics of Descartes Marthinus Versfeld, 2016-08-12 Originally published in 1940 this book provides a thorough discussion of Ren Descartes philosophy of metaphysics examining the three major points of the mind and body freedom of the will and religion and science Specific chapters are devoted to the Cartesian theory and the Meditations in particular the Sixth

*The Science of Nature in the Seventeenth Century* Peter R. Anstey, John A. Schuster, 2006-06-28 One of the hallmarks of the modern world has been the stunning rise of the natural sciences The exponential expansion of scientific knowledge and the accompanying technology that so impact on our daily lives are truly remarkable But what is often taken for granted is the enviable epistemic credit rating of scientific knowledge science is authoritative science inspires confidence science is right Yet it has not always been so In the seventeenth century the situation was markedly different competing sources of authority shifting disciplinary boundaries emerging modes of experimental practice and methodological reflection were some of the constituents in a quite different m lange in which knowledge of nature was by no means p eminent It was the desire to probe the underlying causes of the shift from the early modern nature knowledge to modern science that was one of the stimuli for the Origins of Modernity Early Modern Thought 1543 1789 conference held in Sydney in July 2002 How and why did modern science emerge from its early modern roots to the dominant position which it enjoys in today s post modern world Under the auspices

of the International Society for Intellectual History The University of New South Wales and The University of Sydney a group of historians and philosophers of science gathered to discuss this issue However it soon became clear that a prior question needed to be settled first the question as to the precise nature of the quest for knowledge of the natural realm in the seventeenth century **Journal of Early Modern Studies, Volume 10, issue 1 (Spring 2021)** Vlad ALEXANDRESCU, Sorana CORNEANU, ARTICLES Patrick BRISSEY Reasons for the Method in Descartes Discours Abstract In the practical philosophy of the Discours de la Methode before the theoretical metaphysics of Part Four and the Meditationes Descartes gives us an inductive argument that his method the procedure and cognitive psychology is veracious at its inception His evidence akin to his Scholastic predecessors is God a maximally perfect being established an ontological foundation for knowledge such that reason and nature are isomorphic Further the method he tells us is a functional definition of human reason that is like other rationalists during this period he holds the structure of reason maps onto the world The evidence for this thesis is given in what I call the groundwork to Descartes philosophical system essentially the first half of the Discours where through a series of examples in the preamble of Part Two he step by step ascends from the perfection of artifacts through the imposition of reason the Architect Example to the perfection of a constituent s use of her cognitive faculties the Wise Lawgiver Example to God perfecting and ordering reality the Divine Artificer Example Finally he descends establishing the structure of human reason which undergirds and entails the procedure of the method the Laws of Sparta Example Hanoch BEN YAMI Word Sign and Representation in Descartes Abstract In the first chapter of his The World Descartes compares light to words and discusses signs and ideas This made scholars read into that passage our views of language as a representational medium and consider it Descartes model for representation in perception I show by contrast that Descartes does not ascribe there any representational role to language that to be a sign is for him to have a kind of causal role and that he is concerned there only with the cause s lack of resemblance to its effect not with the representation s lack of resemblance to what it represents I support this interpretation by comparisons with other places in Descartes corpus and with earlier authors Descartes likely sources This interpretation may shed light both on Descartes understanding of the functioning of language and on the development of his theory of representation in perception Osvaldo OTTAVIANI The Young Leibniz and the Ontological Argument from Rejection to Reconsideration Abstract Leibniz considered the Cartesian version of the ontological argument not as an inconsistent proof but only as an incomplete one it requires a preliminary proof of possibility to show that the concept of the most perfect being involves no contradiction Leibniz raised this objection to Descartes s proof already in 1676 then repeated it throughout his entire life Before 1676 however he suggested a more substantial objection to the Cartesian argument I take into account a text written around 1671 72 in which Leibniz considers the Cartesian proof as a paralogism and a petition of principle I argue that this criticism is modelled on Gassendi s objections to the Cartesian proof and that Leibniz s early rejection of the ontological argument has to be understood in the general

context of his early philosophy which was inspired by nominalist authors such as Hobbes and Gassendi Then I take into account the reconsideration of the ontological argument in a series of texts of 1678 showing how Leibniz implicitly replies to the kind of criticism to the argument he himself shared in his earlier works

Joseph ANDERSON The Necessity of Leibniz Rejection of Necessitarianism Abstract In the Theodicy Leibniz defends the justice of God from two impious conceptions of God a God who makes arbitrary choices and a God who doesn t make choices at all Many interpret Leibniz as navigating these dangers by positing a kind of non Spinozistic necessitarianism I examine passages from the Theodicy which reject not only blind Spinozistic necessitarianism but necessitarianism altogether Leibniz thinks blind necessitarianism is dangerous due to the conception of God it entails and the implications for morality Non Spinozistic necessitarianism avoids many of these criticisms Leibniz finds that even necessary actions should receive certain rewards and punishments as long as they necessarily lead to a change in future behavior But Leibniz rejects even non Spinozistic necessitarianism on the grounds that it is inconsistent with punitive justice Whether Leibniz successfully avoids necessitarianism it ought to be clear that he sees his own position as significantly distinct from necessitarianism and not just Spinozism

REVIEW ARTICLE Dana JALOBÉANU Big Books Small Books Readers Riddles and Contexts The Story of English Mythography Anna Maria Hartmann English Mythography and its European Context 1500 1650 Oxford Oxford University Press 2018 x 283 pp

CORPUS REVIEW Andrea SANGIACOMO Raluca TANASESCU Silvia DONKER Hugo HOGENBIRK Expanding the Corpus of Early Modern Natural Philosophy Initial results and a review of available sources

BOOK REVIEWS Diego LUCCI Ruth Boeker Locke on Persons and Personal Identity Oxford Oxford University Press 2021 Michael DECKARD Stefano Marino and Pietro Terzi eds Kant s Critique of Aesthetic Judgment in the 20th Century A Companion to its Main Interpretations Berlin De Gruyter 2021 Doina RUSU Jennifer M Rampling The Experimental Fire Inventing English Alchemy 1300 1700 Chicago and London University of Chicago Press 2020

Descartes's Mathematical Thought C. Sasaki, 2013-03-09 Covering both the history of mathematics and of philosophy Descartes s Mathematical Thought reconstructs the intellectual career of Descartes most comprehensively and originally in a global perspective including the history of early modern China and Japan Especially it shows what the concept of mathesis universalis meant before and during the period of Descartes and how it influenced the young Descartes In fact it was the most fundamental mathematical discipline during the seventeenth century and for Descartes a key notion which may have led to his novel mathematics of algebraic analysis

**Philosophic Classics: From Plato to Derrida** Forrest Baird, 2023-09-04 Philosophic Classics From Plato to Derrida includes essential writings of the most important philosophers from almost two millennia of Western philosophy In updating this Seventh Edition editor Forrest E Baird has continued to follow the same criteria established by the late Walter Kaufmann when the Philosophic Classics series was first established

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most footnotes treating textual matters variant readings etc have been omitted and important words from antiquity have been transliterated and put in angle brackets In addition each thinker is introduced by a brief essay composed of three sections 1 biographical a glimpse of the life 2 philosophical a r sum of the philosopher s thought and 3 bibliographical suggestions for further reading A timeline places important philosophers alongside other important thinkers world leaders and major global events Photos and paintings with explanatory captions illuminate the ideas debates and places discussed in the text New to the Seventh Edition New translations Plato Euthyphro Apology Crito and Phaedo Aristotle Nichomachean Ethics Epicurus Letter to Menoeceus and Principal Doctrines Boethius The Consolation of Philosophy Anselm Proslogion Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola Oration on the Dignity of Man Ren Descartes Correspondence with Princess Elizabeth Gottfried Leibniz Monadology Jean Jacques Rousseau The Social Contract Immanuel Kant Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics and Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals Additional material Porphyry s Life of Plotinus in part Francis Bacon Aphorisms selections from Novum Organum Karl Marx Theses on Feuerbach A J Ayer Language Truth and Logic in part Updated annotated bibliographies with each bibliography now broken into two sections one for beginning and another for advanced students

The Cartesian Mind Jorge Secada, Travis Tanner, Cecilia Wee, 2025-09-03 Descartes is widely acknowledged as a central figure in the origins of modernity The nature of his thought and of the role it played is however a matter of considerable dispute among experts The Cartesian Mind is a significant contribution to this debate It covers the full extent of his work not only placing it in its historical context but also exploring its reception legacy and contemporary significance Comprising over 40 chapters by an international team of distinguished scholars the collection is divided into 3 parts Historical Context Philosophical Themes Reception and Influence Within these parts key topics are addressed including Descartes s life and works Platonism Scholasticism Stoicism skepticism atomism meditation method the self God will and freedom mind and body biology and medicine causation mathematics the natural sciences philosophy of science ethics and the origins of idealism Descartes s reception and legacy within science and philosophy from the seventeenth century to our days including current analytic and continental traditions as well as within the broader contemporary culture also receive sustained attention Descartes s work is central to all areas of philosophy including epistemology metaphysics philosophy of mind philosophy of science and ethics As such The Cartesian Mind is essential reading and an indispensable tool for all students and researchers in the discipline

**Descartes's Imagination** Dennis L. Sepper, 1996-01-01 A work of major importance for the interpretation of Descartes s development and for the understanding of the function of the imagination in Descartes s early works Descartes s Imagination will be a must in Descartes and imagination studies It is long overdue Eva T H Brann author of The World of Imagination Sum and Substance A significant contribution to our understanding of the development of Descartes s philosophy William R Shea author of The Magic of Numbers and Motion The Scientific Career of Rene Descartes

*The Cambridge History of Science: Volume 3, Early Modern Science* David C. Lindberg, Katharine

Park, Ronald L. Numbers, Roy Porter, 2003 An account of European knowledge of the natural world c 1500 1700

*Philosophies of Technology: Francis Bacon and his Contemporaries (2 vols.)*, 2008-10-31 The essays in the present volume attempt to historically reconstruct the various dependencies of philosophical and scientific knowledge of the material and technical culture of the early modern era and to draw systematic conclusions for the writing of early modern history of science The divisive transformation of humanist scholarly culture the Scholastic school philosophy as well as magic in the form of a philosophy of practice is always associated with the work of Francis Bacon All of these essays in this volume reflect the close interaction between technical models and knowledge production in natural philosophy natural history and epistemology It becomes clear that the technological developments of the early modern era cannot be adequately depicted in the form of a pure history of technology but rather only as part of a broader cultural history of the sciences Contributors include Todd Andrew Borlik Arianna Borrelli Thomas Brandstetter Daniel Damler Luisa Dolza Moritz Epple Berthold

Heinecke Dana Jalobeanu J rgen Klein Staffan M ller Wille Romano Nanni Jarmo Pulkkinen Pablo Schneider Andr s Vaccari Benjamin Wardhaugh Sophie Weeks and Claus Zittel **Burchard de Volder and the Age of the Scientific Revolution** Andrea Strazzoni, 2019-11-18 This monograph details the entire scientific thought of an influential natural philosopher whose contributions unfortunately have become obscured by the pages of history Readers will discover an important thinker Burchard de Volder He was instrumental in founding the first experimental cabinet at a European University in 1675 The author goes beyond the familiar image of De Volder as a forerunner of Newtonianism in Continental Europe He consults neglected materials including handwritten sources and takes into account new historiographical categories His investigation maps the thought of an author who did not sit with an univocal philosophical school but critically dealt with all the major philosophers and scientists of his age from Descartes to Newton via Spinoza Boyle Huygens Bernoulli and Leibniz It explores the way De Volder s un systematic thought used rejected and re shaped their theories and approaches In addition the title includes transcriptions of De Volder s teaching materials disputations dictations and notes Insightful analysis combined with a trove of primary source material will help readers gain a new perspective on a thinker so far mostly ignored by scholars They will find a thoughtful figure who engaged with early modern science and developed a place that fostered experimental philosophy In the Shadow of Descartes G.H. Von Wright, 2013-03-09 Descartes made a sharp distinction between matter and mind But he also thought that the two interact with one another Is such interaction possible however without either a

materialist reduction of mind to matter or an idealist phenomenalist reduction of matter to mind These questions overshadow the Western tradition in metaphysics from the time of Descartes to present times The book makes an effort to stay clear of reductivist views of the two Cartesian substances It defends a dualistic psycho physical parallel theory which reconciles freedom of action with determinism in nature Basic problems in perception theory are also discussed with special emphasis on hearing and sound Because of the intrinsic interest of the subject and the author s non technical presentation of it the



book should appeal to all readers with a serious interest in philosophy and psychology      **Mathematizing Space** Vincenzo De Risi, 2015-01-31 This book collects the papers of the conference held in Berlin Germany 27-29 August 2012 on Space Geometry and the Imagination from Antiquity to the Modern Age The conference was a joint effort by the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Berlin and the Centro di Ricerca Matematica Ennio De Giorgi Pisa      **Newton and Empiricism** Zvi Biener, Eric Schliesser, 2014-05-16 This volume of original papers by a leading team of international scholars explores Isaac Newton's relation to a variety of empiricisms and empiricists It includes studies of Newton's experimental methods in optics and their roots in Bacon and Boyle Locke's and Hume's responses to Newton on the nature of matter time the structure of the sciences and the limits of human inquiry In addition it explores the use of Newtonian ideas in 18th century pedagogy and the life sciences Finally it breaks new ground in analyzing the method of evidential reasoning heralded by the Principia its nature strength and development in the subsequent three centuries of gravitational research The volume will be of interest to historians of science and philosophy and philosophers interested in the nature of empiricism      **Icons of Unbelief** S. T. Joshi, 2008-10-30 Discusses the ideas and impact of 27 atheists agnostics and secularists whose ideas have shaped society over the last 200 years In the opinion of many critics and philosophers we are entering an age of atheism marked by the waning of Christian fundamentalism and the flourishing of secular thought Through alphabetically arranged entries written by expert contributors this book profiles 27 iconic figures of unbelief whose ideas have shaped American society over the last 200 years Included are entries on influential figures of the past such as Albert Einstein and Voltaire as well as on such contemporary figures as Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris Each entry discusses the ideas and lasting significance of each person or group provides sidebars of interesting information and illuminating quotations and cites works for further reading The volume closes with a selected general bibliography Students in social studies and history classes will welcome this reference as a guide to the ideas central to the American separation of Church and State and to many of the political debates at the heart of society today Each entry discusses the ideas and lasting significance of the person or group provides sidebars of interesting information and quotations and closes with a list of works for further reading The volume ends with a selected general bibliography Students in history and social studies classes will welcome this reference as a guide to the American separation of Church and State and to the ideas central to contemporary political debates

**Cartesian Psychophysics and the Whole Nature of Man** Richard F. Hassing, 2015-11-19 In *The Passions of the Soul* Descartes proclaims his intention to explain the passions only as a Physicist and titles Part I About the passions in general and incidentally about the whole nature of man not an incidental item Two questions orient the present inquiry What does Descartes mean by the whole nature of man and how does a general theory of the human emotions based on his physics account for it Not surprisingly Descartes does not fulfill the letter of his intention rather he explains the passions only partly as a Physicist The other part of his study irreducible to any physics consists in his own analysis of the life of the human being

as union of soul and body The resulting account is an unusual combination of scientific hypothetico deductive psychophysics and prescientific insight into human experience In it a quasi mechanical theory of the impact of imagination on passion and volition is combined with a distinctive emphasis on the human propensity to esteem what we imagine to be great Human history and therewith the whole problematic nature of man is constituted in significant measure by the particular and variable objects of esteem The correction and improvement of our nature is the aim of Descartes s culminating doctrine of the one thing that is truly estimable the firm and constant resolution to use well autonomously one s own individual powers of cognition and volition With the return of religious war The Passions of the Soul is newly relevant      Descartes's Dreams

Ann Scholl,2005 Ann Scholl revises the traditional understanding of the role of imagination and sensory perception in Descartes s Meditations Traditionally Cartesian scholars have focused primarily on sensory perception as the more significant of the two special modes of thought In this work Ann Scholl describes how a better understanding of Descartes s skepticism and his arguments for dualism are reached when imagination instead is understood as the more primary of the two special modes of thought The result is a fresh reading and interpretation of Descartes s most influential work

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